

International Affairs Council

Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's interests and perspective are global given NOAA's broad mission. Consequently, its international interests are significant and demand attention at the highest levels of the organization. To advance NOAA's mission, the Office of International Affairs provides policy advice and support with respect to negotiations, partnerships, and other NOAA international interests and activities. The purpose of this Charter is to establish the International Affairs Council (IAC) that will be NOAA's focal point for international policy, activities, and important crosscutting topical areas. Using the Council, NOAA international affairs will be managed using matrix management principles to ensure coordination, cooperation, and communication on international activities, and to enhance the visibility of NOAA's international activities and accomplishments.

Membership:

This Charter establishes a NOAA International Affairs Council (IAC). Council members represent NOAA's Line Offices (LO) and Staff Offices (SO), including special representation for other offices or individuals as appropriate. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs (DAS/IA) chairs the Council.

The executive in charge of each of the following NOAA entities shall appoint a Council member:

- Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- National Ocean Service (NOS)
- National Weather Service (NWS)
- National Environmental Satellite and Data Information Service (NESDIS)
- Office of General Counsel (OGC)

In addition, the executives in charge of the following offices may appoint a Council member as necessary and appropriate:

- Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO)
- Office of Finance and Administration (OFA)

Roles and Responsibilities:

Following matrix management principles, representatives to the International Affairs Council will have a dual reporting chain – to the DAS/IA and to their respective LO/SO executives. For the purposes of reporting, issues will be classified pursuant to topical areas; the authority to assign issues residing with the IAC.

Protocols will be developed by the IAC and used to guide actions relative to key elements including communication, international interests, and interactions with other federal agencies.

Decision Making Process:

To ensure that a corporate NOAA is able to respond effectively to its global challenge, the international affairs of the agency must be organized such that multi-directional coordination is possible through the use of the Council. Decisions in the IAC will be accomplished by informed consensus. The Council will develop specific standards and operating procedures attendant to the tasks of the IAC. The Chair will strive for consensus on all issues, however, in the absence of consensus final decisions will be made by the Chair.

Charter:

The IAC is the advisory, information sharing, and coordinating group at the center of NOAA's international affairs management process. It is also responsible for making recommendations, through the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, to the NOAA Executive Council (NEC) concerning international policy, objectives and priorities. Meetings of the IAC can be requested by either the DAS/IA or a member of the IAC, although meetings will be at the call of the DAS as needed and annually to address strategic planning, budget priorities, and resource issues.

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